

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4178

S E C R E T USUN 6111

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UN US CB

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR BENNETT'S MEETING WITH CAMBODIAN REPRESENTATIVE,  
NOV 19

REF: USUN 5999

1. PURSUANT TO CAMBODIAN REQUEST NOVEMBER 19, AMBASSADOR BENNETT RECEIVED CAMBODIAN REPRESENTATIVE THINOUNN PRASITH AND HIS AIDE THAT AFTERNOON AT USUN. THIOUNN PRASITH SAID THAT, ON BEHALF OF HIS GOVERNMENT, HE COULD REPORT THAT IT HAD NO INFORMATION CONCERNING ANY OF THE FOUR AMERICAN JOURNALISTS OR THE AMERICAN MILITARY OR CIVILIAN PERSONNEL WHOSE NAMES WE HAD GIVEN HIM. HE SAID THAT THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT REPEATEDLY HAD MADE STATEMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT IT HELD NO AMERICAN PRISONERS. HE REITERATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT KNEW NOTHING ABOUT ANY OF THE FOUR JOURNALISTS, AND COULD NOT CONFIRM THAT THEY WERE ALIVE OR DEAD. ALL THOSE JOURNALISTS PREVIOUSLY HELD TEMPORARILY AS PRISONER HAD BEEN QUICKLY RELEASED. CAMBODIA PREFERS NOT TO BRING UP THE PAST BY REPEATEDLY DISCUSSING THIS MATTER.

2. AMBASSADOR BENNETT REPLIED THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THOSE COLLEAGUES OF THE JOURNALISTS WHO HAD BEEN WITH THEM IN CAMBODIA, AND THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF THE MISSING TO BELIEVE THAT THEY HAD "DISAPPEARED FROM THE EARTH." THEY COULD BE NOWHERE BUT IN CAMBODIA, FOR IF THEY WERE, WE WOULD HAVE HAD NEWS OF THEM. THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT MUST EXPECT THAT QUESTIONS ABOUT THEM WILL CONTINUE. WOULD THIOUNN PRASITH

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AGREE TO RECEIVE WALTER CRONKITE, IN HIS CAPACITY AS HEAD OF

A PRIVATE AMERICAN ORGANIZATION CONCERNED WITH THE MISSING?  
THIOUNN PRASITH REPLIED THAT HE ALREADY HAD MET IN PEKING WITH  
MR. CRONKITE'S DEPUTY AND HAD TOLD HIM THAT CAMBODIA HAD NO  
INFORMATION AVAILABLE. HE THEREFORE WOULD PREFER NOT TO MEET  
AGAIN WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CRONKITE GROUP.

3. THIOUNN PRASITH SAID-THAT CAMBODIA WOULD PREFER TO AVOID  
DISCUSSING THE PAST IN UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEES AND, UP TO NOW,  
HAD SUCCEEDED IN DOING SO. IF THE UNITED STATES BROUGHT UP  
THE MATTER OF THE MISSING IN EITHER THE THIRD OR SIXTH  
COMMITTEE, HOWEVER, CAMBODIA WOULD BE FORCED TO REACT.  
AMBASSADOR BENNETT REMINDED HIM THAT OUR INTENTION WAS TO MAKE  
A NON-PROVOCATIVE STATEMENT IN AN EFFORT TO REASSURE THE  
FAMILIES OF THE MISSING THAT THE MATTER WAS OF DEEP CONCERN TO US  
AND THAT WE WERE CONTINUING TO SEEK INFORMATION ON THE MISSING.

4. ATMOSPHERE OF MEETING WAS CORRECT AND THIOUNN PRASITH WAS  
POLITE IN MANNER, HE FOUND NO PROBLEM IN RESPONDING QUICKLY AND  
COMING TO USUN PREMISES. HOWEVER, HIS POSITION WAS FIRM, AND  
HE YIELDED NO INFORMATION.  
MOYNIHAN

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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